

Remarks

A total of fourteen claims are pending in this Application, corresponding to all of the claims as filed. In the subject Official Action, mailed 01/11/2005, Claims 10 through 14 are indicated to be allowable, and Claims 1 through 9 are indicated to be allowable if amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112 on the grounds of indefiniteness.

Specifically, the Examiner pointed out clearly and correctly, that the phrase "gripping structure [16]" in Claim 1, as filed, is indefinite because reference number 16 does not appear in the specification or drawings. And with further reference to this claim, the Examiner also pointed out correctly that the term "said plastic article" lacks antecedent basis in the claim.

In full response to these helpful notations, Applicant has amended Claim 1 by replacing reference number 16 with number 13, and by changing "said plastic article" to "said article of manufacture" [12]. Neither one of these amendments raises any issues of new matter, because antecedent basis for the use of both of the replacement terms is set forth clearly in the application as filed.

That is, use of reference number 13 to identify the "gripping structure" is supported clearly in the specification as filed, at page 5 on the third line of the first paragraph beneath the heading, Detailed Description Of The Preferred Embodiment, where it is stated that "...optical lens [12], is engaged by the jaws [13] of a gripping structure or chuck. . ." In this regard, it is apparent that applicant omitted, through oversight, inclusion of number 16 following the word "chuck" at this location in the specification, where it was intended to identify the gripping structure that includes the (gripping) jaws [13]. In view of the numerous allusions in the specification to any well known form of gripping structure, applicant included illustrative gripping jaws [13] to represent the overall gripping structure but unintentionally overlooked any more detailed showing of such a structure. It is apparent in any event, that such a structure would not be seen in Figure 2 where it would be disposed behind the plane of "article of manufacture 12." Under these circumstances, and in view of the nature of the invention, the disclosure of jaws 13 as filed

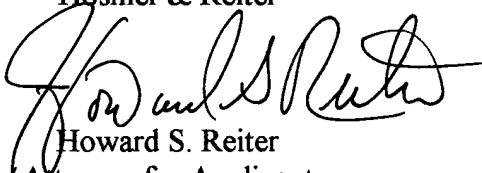
presents ample antecedent support for characterizing jaws 13 as the gripping structure in the claims.

With reference to changing the term, "said plastic article", to: "said article of manufacture" (e.g. article 12), in Claim 1, antecedent basis for the use of this term is set forth obviously within the body of the claim as filed, at lines 2 and 6.

Still further in strict accordance with the Examiner's thoughtful and well-appreciated suggestions, grammatical amendments have been made in Claims 1 and 2 to maintain proper antecedent bases within the claim language.

In view of the Amendments, explanations and arguments herein set forth, in strict accordance with the Examiner's kind indications of allowability, Applicant and Attorney assert respectfully that this application now has been placed in proper condition for allowance. Further favorable action on the merits and subsequent allowance of this Application are solicited accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,
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